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DECORATIVE TEXTILE FABRICS

SIMPLER VARIETIES OF DRAPERIES.

By MRS. S. A. BROCK PUTNAM.

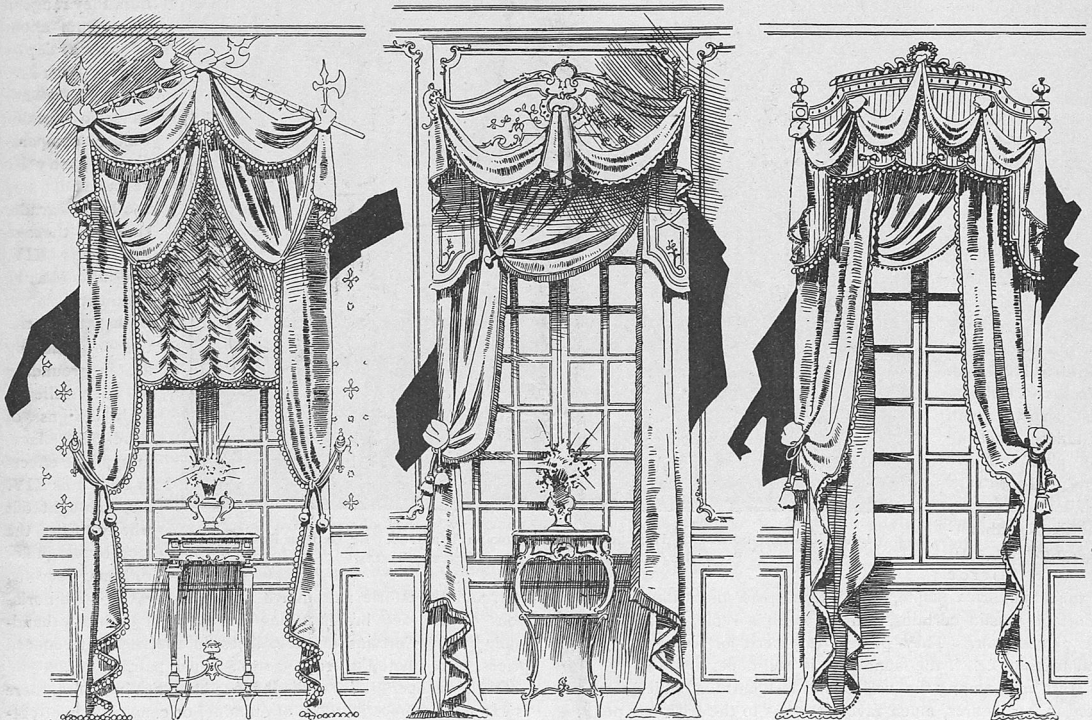


TIME was—and not very many years in the past—when draperies, as now seen in house furnishing in our country, were the exception and not the rule. In some of the more luxuriously appointed houses there were hangings after the order of to-day, but in most instances, with the exception of the windows, and upon these for

the obvious purpose of shading, curtaining was unknown, and bare effects for doors, and absence of the artistic touches in the draping of pictures and other furnishings, prevailed. But all that is changed. It has not been left for the eyes of the wealthy and the fortunate alone to be gratified with the delight which

draperies lend to household appointment. Design and manufacture have been both thoughtful and industrious, the result being a long line of materials which come within the means of persons who may not be able to boast of plethoric purses.

Among the most simple and popular of the stuffs of the present for hangings are the cottage muslins. These come both in white and cream-white, or pale *écru* tints, in plain weaves, and designs of polka or wafer spots, the *fleur-de-lis* and conventional figurings. They are now much used, entering not only into the furnishings of cottages in the country and the less pretentious of city houses, but being frequently, with ladies of refined taste, the preference above the cheaper grades of lace for the under curtains of bedrooms, boudoirs, and the usual haunts of the women of the household. A favorite finish of the cottage muslin hangings is a fluted ruffle, but they are sometimes only hemmed. Ribbon, or a band of the muslin, is used for looping the curtains back, while a tasteful substitute is the string of large, vari-colored oval beads which is sent out with East Indian goods for the purpose understood.



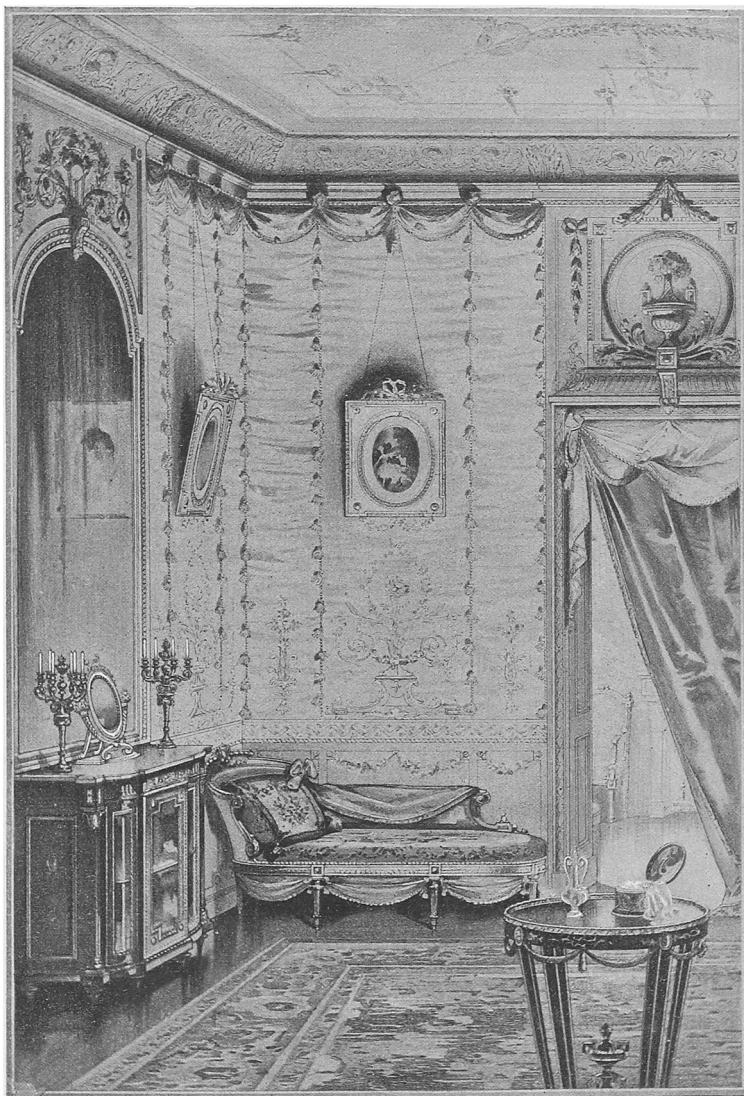
SKETCHES OF FRENCH WINDOW DRAPERIES.

There are no hangings more refreshing in effect, or, indeed, more tasteful, than those of the cottage muslins, provided that floor coverings and standing furniture in a manner correspond. Carpets should be neither too heavy nor of very dark colors. The medium tones and *faded* tints now seen in fashionable carpets accord well with diaphanous effects in the cottage muslin draperies, while they are peculiarly suited to the Chinese matings warmed up with Oriental rugs, which understand a compromise that tasteful ladies make in the fitting up of the guest-chamber, or spare bedroom—the standing furniture of bamboo or some one of the light woods now in vogue coming in as the harmonious belongings of a very charming apartment. There might be cited in illustration the guest-chamber in a suburban residence, in which the curtains and other hangings are of pure white, polka-dotted muslin, finished with a fluted-ruffle, four inches wide, tied back with satin ribbon in old-rose color; the carpet in *écru* grounding warmed up with scrolls of old rose, and the standing furniture of ash wood. A young lady's room, hung with cottage muslin tied back with fresh rose ribbons, is carpeted with Chinese matting in plain color, overlaid with rugs in delicate colors, and has a cabinet-*chiffoniere* and cheval mirror

framed in curled maple, a brass bedstead and willow chairs. Cottage muslin curtains, finished with a ruffle, sell at about \$2.25 per pair. They possess the merit of improving with laundering, *i.e.*, if the laundering is well done.

Just now, among the varieties of lace curtains which can be had at low figures, much favor attaches to the Irish cut point. This is, indeed, not a point, in the sense of a hand-made lace,

but a woven manufacture of plain net grounding, relieved with designs of *appliqué* and cut effects; and according as the designs are more or less simple or rich, Irish cut point curtains range in price from about \$4 up to \$50 per pair. They are seen in pure white, and in cream-white grounding, relieved with figures in pure white, the former, it is said, the preference of urban taste.



LOUIS XVI. BOUDOIR WITH HANGINGS OF EMBROIDERED TAPESTRY. BY GEORGE REMON.
FROM DIE TAPEZIERKUNST, ERNST WASMUTH, BERLIN.

For a time curtains and other hangings, bordered with antique (Alsace) lace, or objectively of this lace, were in disfavor, in a measure; and even now they are by no means abundant in the market, having been only recently revived in some of the best houses, with the body of net, instead of scrim or étamine, as formerly, when a grounding material is employed. As the lace used in these curtains is narrower or wider, more simple or rich, they range in price from about \$8 upward per pair.

The next advance in curtains which, comparatively, may be regarded as of medium grade, embraces those of the Louis XIV. and the Marie Antoinette laces. Both these varieties of hanging are in grounding of net, relieved with designs of hand-made lace, in *appliqué* effects in the Louis XIV. lace wrought out wholly with the lace braids in flouriations, scrolls,

etc., and the Marie Antoinette lace incorporating with flouriations of the lace braids, stems and tendrils of heavy hand-made cord. Curtains of these laces, in a lot held at reduced prices, were quoted at from \$20 to \$30 per pair.

Of the cheaper grades of diaphanous hangings in colors, there is extended choice in those of étamine, or canvas body of cotton, relieved with stripes or figures of silk. The striped

curtains, of their kind, are in semi-Oriental effects, while great wafer spots, *fleurs-de-lis*, and other figures dot the body of those that come under the head of floriated. They sell, according to quality, at from \$3 to about \$5 per pair, and are used with or without under curtains of lace or muslin. When seen with the under curtain they are generally tied back; when without the under curtain, they are, in most cases, left to hang straight, merely clearing the floor.

Among Oriental hangings we find a variety of cotton manufacture, stamped with gold, in designs closely resembling certain of the indescribable embroideries peculiar to the East, of the soft *faded* tints now fashionable, called Hechima cloth, at \$2.50 per pair. Curtains of crêpe cloth, in old tones of colors, enriched with silk embroidery, sell as low as \$4 per pair. Hangings of pongee gauze of the soft colors now in favor, in stamped designs of gold and silver, sell at \$6.50 per pair. Hangings of pongee gauze, in embroidered designs of silk and tinsel threads, can be had at \$12 per pair. Shifu cloth curtains, embroidered in silk and gold thread, are held at from \$7.50 to \$18 per pair, according to quality; and Shiku hangings, enriched with embroidery of silk floss, command \$18 per pair.

As a rule, the hangings for doors and the materials employed, are heavier than those which are used for windows, although the lightest laces and muslins sometimes serve the purpose of the portières which divide the rooms of a suite.

There is extensive demand for portières of jute velours, handsome illustrations of which, in floriated designs, with a border, are shown at from \$5 to \$15 per pair. Reversible patterns of fine quality are sold at \$27.50; and from these prices, according to quality, jute velour portières range in price up to \$40 per pair.

Chenille portières continue in favor, and are to be commended as much for their effectiveness as for their inexpensiveness. They appear in all the popular furnishing colors, with a finish of fringe with a netted heading, and are to be bought as low as \$2 per pair.

A grade more elegant than the chenille portières, to the fastidious, are those of Japanese cotton manufacture, in printed designs, which are held at \$8.50 per pair.



LOUIS XV. SALON WITH WALL PANELS IN SILK BROCADE. BY GEORGE REMON.

The line of materials to be made up into hangings, and suited alike to windows and doors, is long and varied. Among the new stuffs at cheap prices, to which attention is now directed, are cotton armures in all the desirable colors, quoted at 60 cents and upward per yard; and a plain texture of linen, known as Linen Art Cloth, which is held at \$1 per yard—a single width of these goods serving for one side, or half the hanging.

Silk-faced armures, some of which are exceedingly rich, sell at from \$1.75 to \$2 per yard.

Figured tapestries, new designs of which are in stripes and blossoms, and very dainty and pleasing, sell at from \$1 upward per yard; and satin figure, a very popular material for draperies, sells at \$3.25 per yard.

For sash curtains, and the half curtains now drawn across the lower sash of windows, and mirror and picture draperies, there has been no defection from the soft silks. They have come out in the standard colors, and in new tones of color and new designs; those of domestic manufacture, 36 inches in width, selling at 75 cents per yard; while the Corah and Yamah silks, 36 inches wide, of Chinese manufacture, sell at \$2 per yard.

Bagdad hangings hold their own in popular estimation, and while remarkable rather than handsome, strictly speaking, they are regarded as stylish, and are of the intrinsic value which usually attaches to Oriental manufactures. They retain their original characteristics, from season to season, both in designs and in the colors which have so long entered into them, and have place among the standard treasures of judicious house furnishing. They are used mostly for door draperies, though serving equally useful purpose as covers for lounges and other upholstery arrangements. According to quality, they are held at from \$7 to \$25 each.

Despite French direction, American preference inclines to poles rather than cornices in the adjustment of hangings. For door hangings, subject to continual displacement, poles, with their necessary rings, are certainly much more convenient than cornices, yet much might be said in favor of cornices for window hangings, especially if lambrequins are to be considered. But, after all, this is a question best settled by individual taste, or the judgment of the upholsterer; while a recent unique and pleasing adjustment of window curtains shows a lambrequin arrangement effected by running a scarf of soft silk through the interstices of a strip of quill work below the pole, thus forming several artistic festoons, with a floating end at each side.

DECORATIVE NOTE.

A PICTURE window in a Pittsburg residence contains a picturesquely attired maiden in purple tunis with yellow scarf, holding aloft a covered dish. At her side is an expectant peacock, and on the balustrade at each side a bird expands his decorative tail feathers. The window fulfills all the conditions of the picture, but with the glass alone, no paint being used. The figures are life size and are framed in a wide border made up of an arrangement of oak leaves. This is very clever, not only in the disposition of the design and the spacing, but in the color which at its base suggests the red autumn foliage, and lightens as it rises into olive and reddish greens, the ribbing of the glass suggesting also the texture of the seré leaves.

TAPESTRY.



to ancient wall hangings.

THE art of tapestry is as old as the earliest traces of civilized existence. The first tapestries were the tent-hangings of the early nomadic tribes. The ancient Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Hebrews, left evidence behind them of the existence of tapestries in their scheme of decoration. A mystic significance was attached

to ancient wall hangings. When the temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt, 19 B. C., one of its glories was a Babylonian tapestry, in which the presence of scarlet signified fire; of linen, the earth; of azure, the air; and of purple, the sea. The legend of Penelope's web and the story of Arachne argue the presence of tapestry among the early Greeks.

The superb hangings of the Parthenon, and the celebrated tapestries belonging to Alexander the Great, are matters of history. Tapestries were much used by the Romans. The idea of representing scenes and compositions by means of the shuttle instead of by the brush, was greatly developed by the Latin race, although similar subjects were depicted by Greek and Oriental weavers. Tapestries and embroideries increased in sumptuousness among the Romans, and with the supremacy of the early Christian hierarchy, the love of this kind of splendor became still stronger. The tapestry designs of the Lower Empire, and also of more ancient periods, are, singularly enough, reproduced in the mosaics of the time. The embroideries of Byzantium were celebrated for their richness. Of the early mediæval hangings the most famous is the Bayeux Tapestry, woven by Queen Matilda, and representing the conquest of England by



WALL PANEL IN PAINTED TAPESTRY. BY J. F. DOUTHITT, NEW YORK.

the Normans. At this period the embroidery and the tapestry processes were often confused. The Bayeux Tapestry, being worked with lines and stitches on canvas, is properly embroidery.

The aim of tapestry is decorative, and the designs should, therefore, be primarily of a decorative character.

Painted tapestry is a modern art, although its practice was not unknown to the ancients. It is either executed in indelible dyes or in oil colors, on silk, wool, linen, or cotton canvas.